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Security Council

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Letter dated 6 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Group of Arab States, I have the honour, in my capacity as Chair of the Group for the month of May 2016, to ask you, in your capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of May, to call on the Security Council to take urgent action and measures to ensure implementation of Security Council resolutions 2254 (2015) and 2268 (2016) concerning the protection of civilians in Syria, including the convening of an emergency meeting of Council to discuss the protection of civilians.

Please find annexed a copy of League of Arab States resolution 8042 concerning developments in the situation in Syria (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohamed Lemine **El Haycen**
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania
Chair of the Group of Arab States for the month of May 2016

16-07700 (E) 160516 160516

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 6 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Meeting of the League of Arab States at the level of Permanent Representatives (extraordinary session)

Resolution 8042 concerning developments in the situation in Syria

The Council of the League of Arab States,

Meeting in an extraordinary session at the level of Permanent Representatives on 4 May 2016 at the headquarters of the League Secretariat, chaired by Bahrain, and convened at the request of Qatar and with the support of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Morocco, Djibouti and Jordan,

Having considered the note of the Secretariat,

Recalling the relevant resolutions of the Council of the League of Arab States at the summit level and at the ministerial level concerning developments in the situation in Syria, the most recent of which is resolution 8006 (145th ordinary session) dated 11 March 2016,

Reaffirming its unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic,

Expressing its grave concern at the escalation in military operations, aerial bombardments and crimes against defenceless civilians in Aleppo and its countryside,

Reiterating its total solidarity with the Syrian people in the face of the serious violations perpetrated against them, threatening their existence and the lives of innocent civilians,

Reaffirming its full commitment to supporting the aspirations of the Syrian people for freedom, justice and equality, and their inalienable right to choose a system of governance that will enable them to realize their hopes and aspirations to establish peace and security throughout Syria,

Reiterating its unchanging position, and emphasizing that the only possible solution to the Syrian crisis is a political solution achieved through an inclusive political process that meets the aspirations of the Syrian people, in accordance with the final communiqué of the first Geneva conference of 30 June 2012 concerning the political transition process,

Having heard the statements made by the heads of delegations and the Secretary-General,

Decides

1. To condemn and reject the barbaric acts perpetrated by the Syrian regime against defenceless civilians in Aleppo and its countryside, and against civilians throughout Syria; and to regard the massacres committed by the regime in Aleppo and other Syrian cities as a blatant violation of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law;

2. To condemn all terrorist organizations and groups, including Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other terrorist organizations, for the terrorist operations and crimes they perpetrate against Syrian civilians in Aleppo and other areas of Syria;*

3. To strive to bring to international justice all persons who participated in and abetted the barbaric attacks against innocent civilians in Aleppo and other Syrian cities;

4. To reaffirm the need for the Security Council to bear its full responsibility to maintain international peace and security, to strive to implement Security Council resolutions 2254 (2015) and 2268 (2016), which call for a nationwide ceasefire in Syria, and to take all necessary actions and appropriate measures to bring that about as soon as possible;

5. To urge the International Syria Support Group to redouble its efforts and continue striving to implement the communiqué of the first Geneva conference of

* By its memorandum No. 891 of 7 May 2016, the delegation of Egypt expresses its reservation regarding the second operative paragraph of the present resolution, which does not refer specifically to the Nusrah Front; the direct reference to ISIL is followed by the phrase "other terrorist organizations" and nothing more. The Egyptian delegation reiterates its position, which it set out during the discussion of the draft resolution at the session of the Council of the League at the level of Permanent Representatives on 4 May 2016. It is imperative to mention specifically the Nusrah Front, in addition to ISIL, in the aforementioned paragraph, which condemns terrorist organizations for the terrorist operations and crimes they perpetrate against Syrian civilians in Syria. It is also necessary to draw attention to the threat that the Nusrah Front, which is a part of the terrorist Al-Qaida organization, poses to security of Syria and the region.

The Egyptian delegation wishes to make it clear that it is expressing this reservation because the failure to mention the Nusrah Front when making reference to terrorist groups in Syria contradicts the Security Council resolution concerning terrorism and has an impact on international peace and security:

1. When making reference to terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, Security Council resolution 2170 (2014) uses the following formulation in many instances: "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Nusrah Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida."

2. Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) uses the formulation: "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Nusrah Front and other cells, affiliates, splinter groups or derivatives of Al-Qaida." That same resolution specifies there are two previous Security Council resolutions, namely, resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011), that set out the criteria for dealing with derivatives of Al-Qaida.

The Egyptian delegation also wishes to point out that the Nusrah Front is not one of the entities covered by the cessation of hostilities agreement concluded between the Syrian parties on 27 February 2016. Therefore, there can be no doubt concerning the affiliation of this terrorist group, which espouses an extremist terrorist agenda; it cannot be treated as if it were part of the armed Syrian opposition, even though it attempts to make itself appear as if it were one of the opposition factions.

It is important to recall that the Nusrah Front is merely a branch of the terrorist Al-Qaida organization, as evidenced by the fact that the group was established when ISIL dispatched it to Syria. Following the organizational and operational differences that arose between the Nusrah Front and ISIL, the former aligned itself with the terrorist Al-Qaida organization under the leadership of Aiman al-Zawahiri.

Based on the foregoing, the Egyptian delegation reaffirms its reservation regarding the failure of the above-mentioned resolution to mention explicitly the Nusrah Front, while it specifically mentions ISIL. It strongly reiterates that combating and eradicating the terrorist organizations ISIL and the Nusrah Front, as well as all other terrorist organizations, must be the goal of all parties, in the context of Syrian and international efforts to restore peace and security to the Syrian people and build the future Syria.

30 June 2012, the two statements issued by the Support Group at Vienna on 30 October 2015 and 14 November 2015, and the Munich statement of 11 February 2016, and to strive to implement the principles agreed to and set out in those statements, in particular those that pertain to the commencement of negotiations and the formation of a transitional governing authority with full executive powers;

6. To welcome political and diplomatic efforts to achieve an immediate ceasefire and to put an end to hostilities, as that ensures the continuation of negotiations to find a political solution to the Syrian crisis that fulfils the aspirations of the Syrian people;

7. To reiterate its commitment to its resolutions on combating terrorism and safeguarding Arab national security; and its commitment to support to States beset by the scourge of terrorism;

8. To request the Arab Ministerial Committee on Syria to intensify its contacts and consultations with all regional and international actors, particularly the Security Council, with a view to ensuring the adoption of a binding resolution that would bring about an immediate ceasefire and a halt to military operations throughout Syrian territory, as well as a cessation to all hostilities and barbaric violations against Syrian civilians;

9. To request the Group of Arab States in New York to intensify its contacts with the States Members of the United Nations to mobilize international support for efforts aimed at halting the massacres being perpetrated by the Syrian regime against its people, as well as the crimes committed by terrorist organizations;

10. To emphasize that the Security Council must take prompt measures to compel all Syrian parties to comply with the mechanism for the provision of humanitarian assistance approved by the International Syria Support Group at its meetings in Munich and endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 2286 (2016), in order to facilitate the rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance to all affected and besieged areas; and to request the Group of Arab States in New York to follow up on the matter and to make the necessary contacts and hold consultations to that end;

11. To urge Arab and international humanitarian relief organizations to provide prompt humanitarian assistance to all Syrian displaced persons and refugees;

12. To request the Group of Arab States in Geneva to coordinate closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to take all necessary measures to halt the ongoing human rights violations being perpetrated by the Syrian regime, including by providing the necessary protection to children and women, and preventing Syrian hospitals and civilian institutions from being targeted, in accordance with international humanitarian law;

13. To remain in permanent session in order to follow up the serious developments in Syria and to take the necessary actions in that regard.

(*Resolution 8042 — extraordinary session — 4 May 2016*)

Lebanon reaffirms its position of refraining from involvement in the Syrian crisis, in the hope that a Syrian-Syrian agreement can be reached and in order to promote a political solution in Syria.